

## REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

The Abstract of the Disclosure has been amended to address the issue set forth at the top of page two of the Official Action. Accordingly, withdrawal of such objection is respectfully requested.

With respect to the issue discussed at the bottom half of page two of the Official Action concerning the claim recitation defining the "half-connecting state", it is noted that the present application describes, for example in the discussion beginning in the middle of page four of the application, the connecting state of the clutch, the disconnecting state of the clutch and the half-connecting state of the clutch. It is thus believed that the specification satisfies the enablement requirement.

Nevertheless, for purposes of setting forth alternative claim language without narrowing the claim scope, the independent claims have been amended to change the recitation of the "clutch connecting/disconnecting actuator" to --clutch actuator-- and to recite that the clutch actuator actuates the clutch to a connecting state, a disconnecting and a half-connecting state.

It is believed that the foregoing discussion and the aforementioned changes to the independent claims address the claim rejection based on the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112, as well as the claim rejection based on the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112. Accordingly, withdrawal of both rejections is respectfully requested.

In addition, several other minor changes have been incorporated into various claims. For example, the wording in dependent Claim 2 has been changed for purposes of improving the readability the claim. Also, the wording in the last portion

of Claim 3 reciting "from the half-connecting state" has been changed to recite --to the half-connecting state-- to correct an inadvertent but readily apparent typographical error.

It is believed that all of the claims in this application are allowable. Accordingly, early and favorable action with respect to this application is earnestly solicited.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application or should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference with the undersigned would be helpful in resolving any remaining issues pertaining to this application the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

BURNS, DOANE, SWECKER & MATHIS, L.L.P.

Date: July 8, 2005

By: Matthew L. Schneider  
Matthew L. Schneider  
Registration No. 32,814

P.O. Box 1404  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1404  
(703) 836-6620